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BEFORE THE
ILLINOIS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
25th DISTRICT

Hearing held, pursuant to Notice, on the
5th day of April, 2021, between the hours of
10:14 a.m. and 11:10 a.m. via Zoom videoconference.

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A P P E A R A N C E S

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Representative Curtis Tarver, II, Chairman
- Representative Tim Butler, Member
- Representative Dagmara Avelar, Member
- Representative Jackie Haas, Member
- Representative Ryan Spain, Member
- Representative Kelly Burke, Member
- Representative Dave Severin, Member
- Representative Avery Bourne, Member
- Representative Tim Ozinga, Member
- Representative Keith Wheeler, Member
- Representative Larry Walsh, Member

Reported by: Valerie M. Calabria, CSR, RPR
License No.: 084-003928

1 CHAIRMAN TARVER: The House Committee on
2 Redistricting shall come to order at 10:14 on
3 Monday, April 5th, 2021.

4 My name is Curtis Tarver, and I'm the
5 State Representative for the 25th District. I'm a
6 member of the Redistricting Committee and will be
7 chairing today's hearing.

8 I'd like to welcome a few local
9 Representatives who have joined us today.
10 Representative Walsh, Representative Avelar,
11 Representative Burke. And I know that there are
12 also Representatives on from the Republican side of
13 the aisle, and I believe -- excuse me, I should say
14 I'll give them a moment to introduce themselves as
15 well as I read a brief statement into the record.

16 I would like to thank everyone who's
17 chosen to participate in today's hearing. Your
18 insight and participation is important as we begin
19 the redistricting process under unprecedented
20 circumstances. The United States and Illinois
21 Constitutions require that the General Assembly
22 redraw political boundaries every ten years to
23 account for population shifts. These hearings are
24 a part of that process.

1 House Democrats are dedicated to
2 transparency and public participation in the
3 redistricting process. While state law requires a
4 minimum of four public hearings throughout the
5 state, our committee intends to hold far more and
6 present additional avenues for public
7 participation.

8 Our goal is to hear from as many
9 people as possible and to gain as much information
10 as possible about the diverse communities of our
11 state. Our staff has been making hundreds of phone
12 calls to encourage participation in these upcoming
13 hearings. Those who wish to participate should be
14 given an opportunity to do so, period.

15 We're holding a series of virtual and
16 in-person hearings throughout the state. Early
17 last month we announced a scheduled 23 hearings
18 before proposing the redistricting plan. For
19 comparison, in 2011 the House Redistricting
20 Committee held 17 hearings in total.

21 But we're guided in this endeavor by
22 the United States Constitution, federal Voting
23 Rights Act, the Illinois Constitution, the Illinois
24 Voting Rights Act. We're also interested in any

1 relevant demographic information, such as social,
2 political, economic, religious, and any other
3 characteristics that are unique to your community.

4 We want to hear your specific views
5 on any social, political, economic, or religious
6 interests commonly held in the community, any
7 specific interest groups that exist, and any
8 concerns you have regarding the current boundaries
9 or, alternatively, what works well about the
10 current boundaries, and suggestions for the drawing
11 of new boundaries. In short, we want to hear your
12 testimony as well as submit a drawing of new
13 political boundaries.

14 This year for the first time Illinois
15 residents will be able to participate in the
16 process from the comfort of their own homes,
17 including remote participation in these hearings
18 and by drawing their own maps via website. The
19 public drawing portal is available at
20 ilhousedems.com/redistricting. This allows any
21 resident to draw districts and shares those maps
22 with the committee for consideration.

23 The public may also submit written
24 testimony or other public comment to the committee

1 by e-mail at redistrictingcommittee@hds.ilga.gov.
2 All written testimony, public comments, and maps
3 submitted to the committee will be made publicly
4 available at ilga.gov and
5 ilhousedems.com/redistricting. Transcripts of the
6 committee's hearings will also be uploaded to these
7 sites.

8 As for today, we will begin with a
9 short slideshow presentation. Following that brief
10 presentation, we have a number of witnesses who
11 have indicated that they would like to testify. If
12 you submitted written testimony, we'd ask that you
13 just briefly summarize it in your oral
14 presentation. And also as a reminder for all of
15 those who will be testifying, please be sure to
16 state and spell your name for the record so the
17 court reporter can take it down.

18 And now I want to take a brief moment
19 to recognize Spokesperson Butler for any potential
20 comments that he may have from his side of the
21 aisle.

22 Representative Butler?

23 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Thank you, Chairman
24 Tarver. And I hope you made it home safely on

1 Saturday. It was good to visit your district on
2 the south side of Chicago.

3 I just want to recognize a few of my
4 colleagues who are here on the Republican side. I
5 think Representative Severin is on. Representative
6 Haas. Leader Keith Wheeler is with us today. I
7 think Representative Spain and I are both trying to
8 navigate two hearings at the same time, virtual
9 hearings that are going on. Representative Ozinga
10 is with us as well. I'm not quite sure why we
11 scheduled two hearings on the same topic at the
12 same time, but we're trying to cover them both and
13 look forward to the tech support.

14 Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

15 CHAIRMAN TARVER: Thank you. Certainly
16 appreciate that.

17 So we'll go right into the first
18 panel, and for the first panel, I have the witness
19 Wendy Underhill, who is the Lisle Township
20 supervisor.

21 Wendy, are you there?

22 I'm just going to scroll through
23 this. And also I see that Representative Haas is
24 on as well, Rep Butler. I don't know if you

1 mentioned that, but I wanted to mention that she's
2 on as well.

3 I don't see Wendy Underhill in the
4 group. So we'll go to panel two. And I apologize
5 if I mispronounce your name, but I have first up
6 Lorraine Guerrero -- and is it Neumayer? I
7 apologize if I mix that up. But Lorraine is from
8 the Will County Latinx Caucus.

9 Lorraine, are you present?

10 MS. GUERRERO-NEUMAYER: Yes. Hi. My niece is
11 also with me, Lisa.

12 CHAIRMAN TARVER: Hi, Lisa. How are you?

13 That's okay, Lorraine. And just make
14 sure you spell your name for the record for the
15 court reporter and then you can jump right into
16 your testimony.

17 MS. GUERRERO-NEUMAYER: So it's Lorraine,
18 L-o-r-r-a-i-n-e, Guerrero, G-u-e-r-r-e-r-o, and
19 Neumayer, N-e-u-m-a-y-e-r.

20 So good morning, folks. I just have
21 a few remarks. One of them actually has to do with
22 the summary from ten years ago when everyone met
23 for redistricting. And it's actually the summary
24 of someone that's about to testify, Alicia Morales,

1 because when I was reading it, it just kind of
2 stuck with me here.

3 It's really short and simple. It
4 says she's a lifelong resident of Joliet and
5 reiterates the comments made earlier today. She
6 wants to educate the Latino community on
7 redistricting, and this requires transparency. The
8 map should not be drawn with political influence in
9 mind and should not be drawn with political
10 advantages. Maps should not be drawn to create
11 political advantages, and transparency is key to
12 understanding the process.

13 So I really like that, especially the
14 education part because trying to educate yourself
15 on these things can be a little bit tough. I know
16 that I remember when friends were getting together
17 for something that had to do with our boundaries,
18 the map initiative, you know, just trying to learn
19 that process was kind of daunting. But, yes,
20 fairness, fairness. And while I am a
21 representative with the Will County Latinx
22 Democratic Caucus, I think it's important that
23 everybody gets their fair shake and gets closer to
24 equity really. And I wanted to share a story why

1 that's of importance.

2 So being born and raised in Joliet
3 and living and working there the majority of my
4 entire life, I was a trauma therapist, a lot of
5 folks -- and a social worker there, a lot of folks
6 call me for various reasons all the time whether
7 I'm holding an elected office at the time or not.

8 And in 2019 we had folks from ICE
9 coming to our community all the time, and people
10 were really scared. And one of these days I had a
11 young student call me. She was away at a
12 conference for college. And she's crying, and I
13 couldn't understand her at first. And I helped her
14 garner her composure and helped her start
15 breathing. And she said, My mom is at a house
16 cleaning it right now. She's a housekeeper. And
17 she said she doesn't know what to do. She feels
18 afraid and stuck and she can't go home back to
19 Joliet. She's afraid she's going to be deported.

20 And based on some of the legalities
21 of it, she wouldn't have been at all, but she was
22 so scared. And the reason why I'm sharing that is,
23 to me, that's what redistricting is about. It's
24 about making sure that we have boundaries that are

1 small enough, compact enough to really ensure that
2 everybody has representation and people know their
3 communities and they are from the communities of
4 which they represent.

5 And I'll probably never forget the
6 fear in her voice. And, again, I work with
7 children whose parents have been murdered, I work
8 with children who have been sexually abused, and
9 that was like akin to that. She thought she was
10 going to lose her mother and her mother thought she
11 was going to lose her family. And that's just a
12 really scary reality around Joliet where I work and
13 where I live. And to me, that -- I just wanted to
14 share that. That's what redistricting is to me,
15 knowing the community you represent and making sure
16 that the districts are small enough, tight enough,
17 and compact enough so that we are representative of
18 our community. So that's really all I had to share
19 today.

20 CHAIRMAN TARVER: Lorraine, first of all,
21 thank you so much for your presentation. Thanks to
22 your niece for being with us as well.

23 I made a mistake and I did not go
24 through the initial presentation. So I didn't want

1 to cut you off because it was my fault anyway, but
2 I will say I'm glad that you made those comments
3 because a lot of what you discussed I think will be
4 covered in the presentation as well.

5 If you don't mind, if you can maybe
6 stick around for a few minutes of questions after
7 the panel, I'd really appreciate it. But we're
8 going to try to kick it back over to staff now.
9 Again, I apologize. Thank you for your testimony.
10 I really appreciate it.

11 MS. GUERRERO-NEUMAYER: Thank you.

12 MS. JACKSON-DONNELL: Hello. My name is
13 Marissa Jackson-Donnell. I'm an employee of the
14 Illinois House of Representatives. I'm here to
15 give a brief overview of the State's redistricting
16 procedure. I'll briefly discuss the background of
17 redistricting and the redistricting process in
18 Illinois. I'll also be going over federal and
19 state redistricting requirements and guidelines.
20 Finally, we will be looking at what preliminary
21 data reveals about population trends in the state
22 and region.

23 Redistricting is the process that
24 ensures all Illinois residents are afforded equal

1 representation in the state legislature and federal
2 congress as guaranteed by the United States
3 Constitution. The US Supreme Court held a series
4 of rulings in the 1960s that congressional and
5 state legislative districts in each state must be
6 of approximately equal population establishing a
7 principle of one person one vote. As a result,
8 states redraw their congressional and state
9 districts every ten years to reflect changes in
10 population.

11 The timeline for redrawing the
12 legislative map is based on the Illinois
13 constitution. The constitution gives the Illinois
14 legislature the initial responsibility of passing
15 the new legislative map. Both the state House and
16 the state Senate must pass a plan with majority
17 votes which then must be signed by the governor.

18 If a new map does not go into effect
19 by the constitutional deadline of June 30th, the
20 responsibility for creating a new map passes from
21 the legislature to the legislative redistricting
22 commission. The commission will consist of eight
23 members, with two each appointed by the legislative
24 leaders and no more than four from the same

1 political party.

2 A majority vote of five or more
3 commission members will constitute final approval
4 of a new map. However, if the commission does not
5 agree to a map by September 1st, the Illinois
6 Supreme Court will submit two names, one from each
7 party, to the Illinois Secretary of State who will
8 then choose one name at random to serve as the
9 ninth member of the commission. Five of the nine
10 members of the commission must agree to a plan no
11 later than October 5th.

12 In order to understand the process of
13 creating new districts, we must look at some legal
14 guiding principles. First among these is equal
15 population. Congressional districts must be equal
16 in population while state districts must be
17 substantially equal in population. Federal and
18 state law also requires that all districts be
19 continual, meaning that all parts of a district
20 must be next to each other unless connected by
21 water. Annexations and unincorporated areas in
22 municipalities and counties sometimes mean
23 communities are discontinuous. However,
24 congressional and state districts must be adjacent

1 or connected at all points.

2 A more difficult requirement to
3 define is compactness. There are at least 30
4 different scientific ways to measure how compact a
5 district is, but no statute or court precedent
6 identifies standard criteria of compactness.

7 In theory, compactness focuses on the
8 shape of a district's boundaries, how spread out a
9 district is from the central core or where the
10 district's population center of gravity is. In
11 practice, compactness is hindered by geography and
12 on-the-ground realities. So often the
13 interpretation of compactness involves more than a
14 visual test.

15 Illinois is one of 14 states that
16 nest its House districts, also called
17 Representative districts, inside one of its Senate
18 districts, also called legislative districts.
19 Mapmakers will also look where possible to follow
20 existing political and geographical boundaries in
21 ways that maximize a community's opportunity to
22 have its interest represented. As you know,
23 however, county, municipality, township, and
24 natural geographic boundaries are not always

1 compact or contiguous.

2 By studying population data and
3 holding public hearings like this to listen to the
4 thoughts of residents across the state, lawmakers
5 look to identify what are known as communities of
6 interest. A community of interest is a group of
7 people concentrated in a geographic area where
8 socially, culturally, ethnically, economically,
9 religiously, or otherwise alike, and can be joined
10 to a district to most effectively have their voices
11 heard. The factors contributing to any particular
12 community of interest will vary throughout the
13 state.

14 Federal law requires redistricting
15 plans to respect minority representation. The
16 principles of the federal Voting Rights Act are in
17 place to prevent the reduction of opportunities for
18 minority populations to participate equally in the
19 electoral process. However, districts cannot be
20 drawn solely on the basis of race.

21 Illinois law also protects
22 representation of racial and language minority
23 groups. The Illinois Voting Rights Act helps to
24 prevent minority fracturing or dividing of

1 concentration of minorities among two or more
2 districts by requiring mapmakers to consider
3 creating crossover districts, coalition districts,
4 or influence districts.

5 A crossover district is one in which
6 large minority groups may elect the candidate of
7 its choice with help from voters of the majority
8 group.

9 A coalition district brings multiple
10 racial or language minority groups together to
11 elect a candidate of their choice.

12 An influence district allows a group
13 to influence an election outcome without being the
14 majority population in a district.

15 These state law requirements come
16 into play only after compliance with federal law
17 and US and state constitutional requirements on
18 redistricting. In addition, the state law ensures
19 transparency and public participation by requiring
20 public hearings across the state, one of which we
21 are having here right now.

22 At the end of the presentation I will
23 display an e-mail address on the screen which
24 Chair Tarver already provided where you can submit

1 your ideas. The committee is also accepting
2 written testimony today.

3 Now that we've covered the
4 redistricting process, let's discuss what data
5 shows about Illinois' population. The US Census
6 Bureau has delayed the release of much of the
7 decennial census data by more than six months until
8 this fall. However, the US Census Bureau's annual
9 population estimates show some trends that can help
10 inform the work ahead.

11 The 2019 population estimate shows an
12 overall decline in state population over the past
13 decade. There are, however, areas of projected
14 House and population gains. Communities with the
15 largest population by percentage increase since
16 2010 are Kendall, Monroe, Champaign, and Kane
17 counties. Demographically speaking, the state's
18 white population is projected to decline while the
19 African-American population statewide will likely
20 see a smaller overall decline. The Hispanic and
21 Asian population across Illinois are projected to
22 see growth.

23 Locally, Will County is projected to
24 see a modest increase in population. The county's

1 white population stands to decline while the
2 African-American, Asian, and Hispanic population
3 will likely increase.

4 Thank you very much for your
5 attention and for coming out to share your thoughts
6 today. As the chair mentioned, you'll be able to
7 find testimony from this and other hearings on
8 ilga.gov and on ilhousedems.com/redistricting. The
9 redistricting website offers additional ways to
10 engage with the process, including our public
11 drawing portal where you can draw and submit your
12 own district maps. You can send further written
13 testimony and suggestions to the committee any time
14 by e-mailing redistrictingcommittee@hds.ilga.gov.

15 Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN TARVER: Thank you, Marissa. And I
17 apologize again for being a little out of order.

18 We'll now go to Norman Brown of the
19 Will County Black Caucuses.

20 Norman, if you will just make sure to
21 spell your name for the record and you can start
22 your testimony. Thank you, sir.

23 MR. BROWN: Thank you. My name is Norman
24 Brown. That's N-o-r-m-a-n, Brown, B-r-o-w-n.

1 Good morning. I would like to thank
2 the committee for allowing me this opportunity to
3 be heard. I represent the Will County Democratic
4 Central Committee Black Caucus, and I'm here to
5 express our concerns as it relates to remapping.

6 As just mentioned, the
7 African-Americans constitute -- I looked it up last
8 night -- about 12 percent of the Will County
9 population, and over the years this number has
10 suddenly if not slightly increased. I'm glad you
11 confirmed what I discovered last night. And
12 likewise, so has the number of black state elected
13 officials that represent the county of Will.

14 Should there be more black elected
15 officials? You betcha there should be, but we
16 won't get there if the number is reduced through
17 combining like districts or diluting majority black
18 districts or anything else that will cause the
19 number of black elected officials that represent
20 this county in any way, shape, or form to be
21 reduced.

22 The current number of elected
23 officials that represent Will County should not
24 through remapping or otherwise be reduced. The

1 number, if anything, should slightly increase to
2 maintain equity, opportunity, and also, most
3 importantly, represent the black community. My
4 comments I would like to be very brief and I look
5 forward to having some discussion about what I just
6 mentioned and also that in your remapping effort
7 consider the makeup of the county of Will.

8 Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN TARVER: Thank you, Mr. Brown.
10 Appreciate your testimony.

11 And now we will go to Tanner
12 Simeon-Cox who is from the Southwest Suburban
13 Immigrant Project.

14 Tanner, are you on and available?

15 MR. SIMEON-COX: Yes, I am. My name --

16 CHAIRMAN TARVER: Awesome. Sorry to cut you
17 off. You're probably about to do it anyway, but if
18 you can just make sure that you spell your name
19 after you say it, I'd appreciate it.

20 MR. SIMEON-COX: For sure. Thank you.

21 So, yes, I'm Tanner Simeon-Cox.
22 That's spelled T-a-n-n-e-r, then Simeon-Cox,
23 S-i-m-e-o-n, hyphen, C-o-x. Thank you.

24 So, yeah, I am the lead organizer

1 with Southwest Suburban Immigrant Project in
2 Bolingbrook. I'm really appreciative for the
3 invitation to be here with you all today, and I'm
4 hoping that the stories that I share provide
5 valuable context.

6 I should be clear that I'm not a
7 geographer or a statistician and to approach my
8 remarks from either of those two angles would have
9 been inappropriate. However, over the past two
10 years with SSIP I've been fortunate to lead our
11 team of census organizers, supervise our
12 nonpartisan voter engagement, and most recently,
13 organized equitable vaccine distribution in Will
14 County. These hands-on experiences offer what I
15 believe to be key context for the redistricting
16 process.

17 Between the census and our
18 nonpartisan voter outreach, my team engaged upwards
19 of 30,000 community members between the 41st, 81st,
20 and 85th state House districts with a special focus
21 on communities of color and immigrant communities.
22 I'm thankful to say that both of those initiatives
23 were incredibly successful, especially the census
24 where we saw an average of 4 to 5 percent

1 participation increase in our party it tracks.

2 Similarly, through our COVID relief
3 efforts and push for equitable vaccine
4 distribution, we've been able to serve many in
5 northern Will and southern DuPage counties who were
6 left out of federal relief and otherwise would not
7 receive clear culturally and linguistically
8 appropriate information on the vaccine.

9 However, while we celebrate these
10 victories, we also acknowledge that so much has
11 fallen on the shoulders of our community-based
12 organizations. CBOs and community centers fill the
13 gaps where institutions and institutional
14 leadership fail. This has been especially true for
15 us since the vaccine first started becoming more
16 readily available earlier this year.

17 While our Will County CBOs have been
18 saying for a whole year that a clear strategy must
19 be developed to reach immigrant communities and
20 communities of color with the vaccine, we saw that
21 no such equity plan existed for the county. As
22 such, we quickly saw disparities in the rates that
23 communities of color were being vaccinated when
24 compared to their white counterparts. This was

1 especially troubling given how disproportionately
2 impacted communities of color were by COVID-19.

3 Still, after raising these concerns
4 to our local health department we were met with
5 delays and complaints. This has been a leadership
6 problem. And this leadership problem leads to a
7 cycle of continued marginalization. When
8 leadership is not representative of the community
9 it serves or when there's no willingness to address
10 the individual needs of multicultural,
11 multilingual, and multiethnic communities, we see
12 that these very communities face further
13 institutional marginalization.

14 In 2010 our co-founders Jose Vera and
15 Elizabeth Cervantes founded SSIP as immigrant
16 communities were beginning to move out of the city
17 center and into the suburbs. The creation of SSIP
18 had much to do with the need to address the new
19 disparities coming to light as the suburban
20 demographic changed.

21 From our beginning, SSIP has
22 organized the community through advocacy and civic
23 engagement and education. And all of our efforts
24 revolve around building immigrant power in the

1 suburbs. Although not exhaustive, I believe my
2 remarks have demonstrated that there is still much
3 work needed to eliminate the barriers and
4 disparities facing communities of color and
5 immigrant communities in the suburbs.

6 Part of this work is drawing
7 districts that lead to representation reflective of
8 the communities being served. I hope that my
9 narrative, paired with geographic and statistical
10 information provided by experts, demonstrates the
11 need to draw districts in a way that empowers and
12 provides equity to historically marginalized
13 communities. This has to be our starting point for
14 redistricting in the suburbs.

15 Thank you all again so much for your
16 time and for the invitation to be here and I hope
17 my remarks have served you well and I really look
18 forward to seeing this redistricting process
19 unfold.

20 CHAIRMAN TARVER: Thank you very much, Tanner.
21 And just like the likes of Lorraine and Norman, if
22 you can stick around for a few minutes just in case
23 there are questions by Representatives, I'd
24 appreciate that.

1 Next up we have Alicia Morales. And
2 I can see that you are here. She's a community
3 leader. So, Alicia, if you will just spell your
4 name for the record and go right to your testimony,
5 we'd appreciate it. Thanks.

6 MS. MORALES: Good morning. Good morning,
7 everybody. (Speaking Spanish). My name is Alicia
8 Morales. And that's A-l-i-c-i-a, Morales,
9 M-o-r-a-l-e-s. I am currently elected to -- I'm
10 the first Hispanic woman elected to America's First
11 Community College in Joliet, Illinois, which is
12 about 45 miles south of Chicago in Will County, and
13 I'm very proud of that. I'm not representing the
14 board. These are my own special thoughts. So I do
15 want to offer that disclaimer. And I want to thank
16 everybody for being here and for inviting me to
17 this important testimony.

18 And I did this ten years ago and
19 nothing changed. So I really hope that what we are
20 about -- the data we're about to share today, the
21 comments, will be seriously considered and that
22 people that are, you know, handling the
23 redistricting, the leaders, that these leaders have
24 equity and inclusion in mind because, you know,

1 immigrant -- the immigrant communities are growing,
2 we are organizing, we're becoming more active.

3 As I mentioned just a few minutes
4 ago, so we're 45 miles south of Chicago, and in
5 Will County we have about 690,000 people and about
6 20 percent of that is the Latino community. I
7 would like to just echo the words from our previous
8 leaders Mr. Norman Brown and also Mr. Tanner Cox
9 and Ms. Guerrero that you cannot dilute the
10 communities where you're going to have less elected
11 officials that are minorities.

12 If you look at the representation and
13 all across the state in an honest way, especially
14 Latinos right now, we don't have a lot of elected
15 offices south of Chicago. There's not many of us.
16 I happen to be one of those. So anything that we
17 can do that is not going to dilute or minimize the
18 opportunities for US citizen qualified educated
19 people that have a mind and a heart for empowering
20 communities for equity and inclusion, I'm in favor
21 of that. So I'm going to keep my remarks short
22 only because I know we have a lot of other folks on
23 the call today, and I will be available for any
24 questions.

1 Thank you so much.

2 CHAIRMAN TARVER: Thank you very much. I
3 believe -- I'll check my notes here -- that that
4 concludes our first segment, second panel. So are
5 there any questions for either Lorraine, the Will
6 County Latinx Caucus, Norman Brown for the Will
7 County Black Caucuses, Tanner Simeon-Cox for the
8 Southwest Suburban Immigrant Project, or Alicia
9 Morales, who is a community leader?

10 I do see that Representative Butler
11 has his hand raised. So, Representative Butler,
12 all yours.

13 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Thank you, Chair
14 Tarver. I appreciate the opportunity, again, to
15 hear from witnesses. I have a few questions and
16 comments.

17 Ms. Morales, can you -- you mentioned
18 you did this ten years ago and nothing changed.
19 Can you go into a little more in-depth what you
20 mean by that?

21 MS. MORALES: Sure. Thank you so much for the
22 question, Representative Butler. So ten years ago
23 we were asked to -- our information was given to
24 testify in this and nothing -- there's been no

1 follow-up. I'd like to see follow-up that people
2 that reach out to those of us that are on the call
3 can share with us what information, you know, what
4 has taken place.

5 From what I can tell, there has not
6 been much redistricting. But what I would really
7 like to see is that there's follow-up and
8 follow-through. As leaders, that is our
9 responsibility, to always follow through with our
10 constituents or with people that are engaged in the
11 process. Many of us are not experts, we're not
12 geographers by any means. We're simply here
13 because we want to be a voice. So I'm not
14 pretending to be an expert, but I definitely see
15 the disparities in my community in Will County, and
16 I have never ever heard back from anybody to share
17 with me what were those changes. So if you worked
18 on that and you know what those changes were,
19 please share those with us.

20 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: No, I was not in the
21 General Assembly ten years ago, but I think the
22 concern of many of us, especially on the Republican
23 side of the aisle, is that many of the people that
24 did draw the maps ten years ago are the same people

1 that are going to draw them again.

2 I mean, do you feel that the Latinx
3 population is not adequately represented in Will
4 County right now? Is that a big concern of this?

5 MS. MORALES: Thank you so much. Yes,
6 absolutely. And I'm willing to work with -- I've
7 always been willing to work with everybody across
8 the board, Republicans, Democrats. We're all human
9 beings. We all want the same thing. We want good
10 schools. We want safety, you know, safer
11 communities. We want access to job opportunities.
12 We want living wages. We want clean water, clean
13 air. We all want the same thing.

14 And for the Latino community, we are
15 grossly, grossly underrepresented as far as job
16 opportunities, getting elected or appointed to a
17 local office. You know, I get it. We also have to
18 take the initiative to run for office which I have
19 been doing for 20 years. And three failed
20 elections. My fourth election in 2017 I finally
21 won. This isn't my first rodeo.

22 And I do see the gap even within the
23 Democratic Party. We need to learn to work well
24 together, everybody, in the party, outside the

1 party, with all of our constituents because once
2 we're elected, we are elected to serve everyone
3 regardless of socioeconomic status, regardless of
4 party, regardless of race and religion. We are
5 here to work. We are servants of the public. For
6 the public, it's the government. We are here to
7 work for them.

8 And as a Latino woman, a single
9 mother at one point, I have seen the gaps at work,
10 I have seen the gaps everywhere, and even in
11 providing health care to people. So, yes, that is
12 correct, Representative Butler.

13 Thank you for the question.

14 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Well, thank you for
15 your dedication to public service and keeping at it
16 to get into elected position. We do need good
17 people running for elected office and dedicated
18 people who know what the true meaning of public
19 service is. Thank you for doing that.

20 Mr. Brown, I did have a question. Do
21 you know how many -- I don't honestly know. Do you
22 know how many House members represent Will County?

23 MR. BROWN: Yes. There are currently, House,
24 3 of 15 -- I'm sorry. Yes, 3 of 15.

1 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Three of --

2 MR. BROWN: And most of these are, I believe,
3 in the southeastern portion of Will County.

4 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Three of 15 you mean
5 live in Will County? I don't --

6 MR. BROWN: Yes. Not necessarily live in Will
7 County but represents Will County.

8 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Okay. I guess I'm
9 still a little confused there. So my concern along
10 with your line is I think you basically kind of
11 said that Will County should have more
12 representation in the General Assembly. I'm not
13 sure if Will County -- I assume Will County has
14 grown. I don't know if it has or not over the last
15 ten years, but I assume it has.

16 But I think to your point and some of
17 the points of the other people who testified,
18 dividing up communities has become a hallmark of
19 gerrymandered districts. I live in Springfield.
20 So we have four members of the House that represent
21 Sangamon County, that have a portion of Sangamon
22 County in their district. Four members for a
23 county of 200,000 people.

24 So what has been done is Sangamon

1 County has been divided up over the years for
2 partisan advantage one way or the other, to be
3 honest with you. Both sides have done it over the
4 years. Most recently, obviously, the Democrats
5 were able to remap it ten years ago. And this is
6 something that I pointed out in the committee
7 hearing on Saturday in Chairman Tarver's district.
8 When you look at some of these -- you know, I would
9 encourage people to go look at the maps, to look at
10 how the maps look.

11 And I understand that, as the
12 presentation at the beginning of this hearing said,
13 that compactness can mean many things. And I think
14 that's stretched a little bit too far when you look
15 at many of the districts that have divided
16 communities for partisan advantage. And that's
17 what redistricting does. That's what
18 gerrymandering does. It divides communities and
19 neighborhoods for partisan advantage.

20 And we have a constitutional
21 obligation for compactness and our -- it's in the
22 constitution. And I take it at its word. And when
23 you have spaghetti string districts that link
24 neighborhoods together, I think that is really

1 going against the meaning of compactness.

2 So I agree with you, Mr. Brown. I
3 don't think communities should be divided up. My
4 legislative district here in Springfield -- I live
5 on the north end of Springfield. My neighbors who
6 live a few blocks south of me, their representative
7 lives in Decatur, and that doesn't seem like
8 somebody from my neighborhood representing some of
9 my neighbors because that representative lives in
10 Decatur. And I realize the lines have to be drawn
11 where they should. But I think this has really
12 been taken too far.

13 I think to Ms. Morales's point, if
14 you don't take the information in that we are
15 receiving in these hearings and really listen to it
16 and draw maps where communities are left together
17 and neighborhoods are left together, then we have
18 real problems. And I think that really gets to the
19 point of our first witness today
20 Ms. Guerrero-Neumayer, the fact we shouldn't be
21 dividing neighborhoods. And that is something
22 that -- this is the sixth or seventh hearing that
23 I've attended over the last several days, and that
24 has come through loud and clear in each one of

1 these hearings, that we shouldn't gerrymander these
2 districts to divide neighborhoods. We should keep
3 neighbors together because that's how the map
4 should be drawn.

5 So anyway, thank you, Mr. Chairman,
6 for your indulgence, and I look forward to any
7 other questions that might be out there.

8 CHAIRMAN TARVER: Thank you.

9 Are there any other questions for
10 this panel of witnesses before we move on? I'll
11 take a moment to kind of scroll through and make
12 sure I don't see anybody.

13 Okay. Well, I don't believe there
14 are any more questions for that panel. So thank
15 you all for your time, your testimony, your
16 engagement. We certainly appreciate it. I just
17 want to remind you, also, if you want to draw a map
18 or submit additional testimony, public comment, any
19 of those things, you can do that at the website we
20 mentioned earlier. So thank you very much.

21 And now we'll go to our next panel
22 which starts with Denise Winfrey of the Will County
23 Board.

24 Denise, are you there?

1 MS. WINFREY: Yes, I am, Representative.

2 Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN TARVER: Thank you. Would you just
4 spell -- sorry. Go ahead.

5 MS. WINFREY: As you said, I am Denise Winfrey
6 from Will County, Illinois. That's D-e-n-i-s-e.
7 Last name is Winfrey, W-i-n-f-r-e-y. I currently
8 represent District 8 of Will County. I'm the
9 former speaker of this board. And just a few
10 things I want to share with you today.

11 Will County made a concerted effort
12 to get the count out for the census this time
13 around, especially in our black and brown
14 communities. Some of the people on this panel were
15 a part of that. Let's see. Morales, Neumayer,
16 some others helped to do that. And we pushed to
17 make those numbers go up in those areas because we
18 knew the people were there and were not counted.
19 And so we wanted to be sure that any redistricting
20 respects that increase in numbers in those
21 communities, that those people have identified
22 themselves and some of them at great peril to
23 themselves. And so we want them to be represented.

24 My District 8 represents the majority

1 of the black and brown population in Will County.
2 But as was said earlier, on our eastern border, a
3 part of that is represented by somebody who lives
4 over by Olympia Fields. On the western border,
5 part of that is represented by someone who lives
6 further over in Kendall County. So we have a
7 mixture of people representing Will County.

8 This is the 86th -- the bulk of it is
9 the 86th House district that Representative Walsh,
10 who happens to be, as a matter of fact, represents
11 that. But our numbers have gone up in this county.
12 We want to be sure that everybody here, especially
13 in the black and brown community because those are
14 typically the ones who are undercounted, get the
15 representation they deserve, that we get fair,
16 equitable representation, that there is respect for
17 those boundaries so that districts are not cut into
18 pieces and people are not split out.

19 Thank you for allowing me to be on
20 the panel today.

21 CHAIRMAN TARVER: Certainly. And thank you
22 for that perspective. Hopefully you'll be able to
23 stick around for a few moments just in case there's
24 questions for this panel. Thank you so much,

1 Denise.

2 Next up we have Jacqueline Traynere.
3 I apologize again. I'm just going based on the
4 spelling that I have here. But Jacqueline is also
5 from the Will County Board.

6 Jacqueline, are you there? I don't
7 see Jacqueline.

8 MS. WINFREY: Are you looking for Jacqueline
9 Traynere for the Will County Board?

10 CHAIRMAN TARVER: Yes, that's who I'm looking
11 for, but I don't see anyone with that associated
12 name on the list here. So if she jumps on, I'm
13 happy to hear from her as well, but in the interim
14 we'll go to Annette Parker, if Annette's there,
15 also from the Will County Board.

16 Annette, are you on and available?

17 Okay. We'll go to Herbert Brooks,
18 Jr., from the Will County Board if he is on and
19 available.

20 Herbert, are you there?

21 Next, Steve Balich from the Will
22 County Board. Same opportunity.

23 MR. BALICH: Yep, I'm here. I'm here. Steve
24 Balich, B-, like in boy, -a-l-i-c-h.

1 I just have a short comment that when
2 you redistrict stuff, I agree with everybody that
3 you have to keep it completely out of the realm of
4 political stuff. And the reason for that is that
5 when somebody bases it on politics, you can have an
6 area like Naperville that used to be like a solid
7 Republican area now is a pretty much Democrat area.
8 So you're hurting people by trying to wipe an area
9 into a district because of a political party
10 because it can't change in the future.

11 So we have to keep it so that it's
12 about keeping it real precise if we can which I
13 know you can't, not real tight, but there's no
14 reason to have it snake all over the place. People
15 from three suburbs away from me are a little bit
16 different than me. And Joliet, you have areas
17 there that don't fit in with areas -- because it's
18 so big, you have downtown Joliet that doesn't fit
19 in the part that's close to the Grundy County line.
20 So we have to start looking at it -- making it what
21 it's really supposed to be, representing a district
22 of people. And I think that's the most important
23 thing I want to get across.

24 CHAIRMAN TARVER: Thank you for that, Steve.

1 Hopefully you'll be able to stick around for a few
2 moments. I anticipate there might be questions for
3 you as well.

4 Next up I have Becky Simon. I know I
5 saw Becky Simon on here. Becky is from the League
6 of Women Voters.

7 Becky, are you here and available?

8 MS. SIMON: Yes, I am.

9 CHAIRMAN TARVER: Awesome. Go right ahead.

10 MS. SIMON: Can you hear me?

11 CHAIRMAN TARVER: Yes, I can. Go right ahead.

12 MS. SIMON: I'm Becky Simon, B-e-c-k-y,
13 S-i-m-o-n. I'm with the League of Women Voters of
14 Naperville. We serve both Will and DuPage County
15 which is why I'm here today.

16 The League of Women Voters of
17 Illinois has worked for reforms to the state
18 redistricting process since the 1990s. We've been
19 at this for a while. For the past decade efforts
20 have focused on an amendment of the Illinois
21 Constitution to provide for a more transparent
22 process and community input through an independent
23 commission.

24 The League of Women Voters of

1 Illinois believes responsibility for redistricting
2 should preferably be vested in an independent
3 special commission. Additionally, League supports
4 redistricting processes and enforceable standards
5 that promote fair and effective representation at
6 all levels of government with maximum opportunity
7 for public participation.

8 Prior to the last redistricting in
9 2011, the Illinois General Assembly passed a bill
10 protecting the voting rights of racial and
11 linguistic minority communities and requiring the
12 legislature to hold a minimum of four public
13 hearings before passing redistricting plans.
14 However, there was no time allowed for
15 incorporating public input after the maps were
16 proposed.

17 The 2011 bill will not be enough in
18 2021. This year the complete 2020 census data will
19 not be available until well past the date by which
20 the Illinois General Assembly or a backup
21 commission is constitutionally required to draw
22 maps. Therefore it is essential for the ILGA to
23 pass legislation like SB2554. It will provide
24 transparency and allow for more public input into

1 the redistricting process.

2 The legislation would require 35
3 redistricting hearings to pass the number held in
4 2011, a public hearing after the introduction of a
5 final map that will allow for adjustments to be
6 made before the ILGA or a backup commission votes,
7 a website for map submissions from the public and
8 relevant records from the General Assembly's work
9 on the remap, written evidence the final proposed
10 map meets the federal Voting Rights Act and
11 Illinois Voting Rights Act standards, ensures
12 effective representation of racial and linguistic
13 minorities, and provides preservation and
14 protection of the community stakeholders which we
15 have heard much discussed here today.

16 To enable the public to participate
17 in the redistricting process, it is imperative that
18 more information be provided about how more
19 hearings will be conducted, what will be discussed,
20 and that greater notice will be given about hearing
21 dates.

22 Thank you for considering legislation
23 that will make the redistricting process more
24 accessible, equitable, and transparent. Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN TARVER: Thank you, Becky. We
2 certainly appreciate your testimony.

3 And I believe that concludes this
4 panel. I'm sorry. I apologize. Is Jennifer
5 Bertino-Tarrant on, Will County executive? I have
6 her name listed as a possible witness.

7 Jennifer, are you there?

8 I don't believe that she is. So if
9 there are questions for this panel, we'll take them
10 at this time.

11 REPRESENTATIVE BUTLER: Yep, Chairman Tarver,
12 I have a couple thoughts, I guess. And, again, I
13 appreciate the witnesses. And this continues the
14 themes that we've heard throughout these hearings.

15 And, Ms. Winfrey, I appreciate you
16 pointing out that Representative Walsh's district
17 is the 86th District. I'm 87th District, and I'm
18 in Springfield. I'm not sure how the numbers get
19 figured out. But Larry and I are right next to
20 each other numerically, but obviously we're not
21 next to each other geographically, that's for sure.

22 To Ms. Simon, I really appreciate
23 what you said. I mean, so many of us have pushed
24 for a redistricting commission for a long time now.

1 I've been in the General Assembly over six years
2 now. I've cosponsored, I've voted for, I've signed
3 petitions for a nonpartisan citizen-like commission
4 to draw maps. And, unfortunately, to date, when we
5 sit here on April 5th of the map year, the General
6 Assembly hasn't done its job to follow through and
7 create that commission even though there's
8 legislation that's out there currently that would
9 do it, even though 105 members of the Illinois
10 House of Representatives in 2016 voted for
11 constitutional amendment that would put it on the
12 ballot and that did not go anywhere.

13 I believe a majority of the General
14 Assembly in both chambers supports doing it through
15 the commission, and I wish that's how we would do
16 that this year. But, unfortunately, we're going
17 down this road that we've gone down all too often
18 and having partisan maps drawn by the majority
19 party which I think is the way that we're going.

20 You also pointed out the issues with
21 the data. We have grave concerns over the use of
22 American Community Survey Data. We don't believe
23 it accurately reflects, especially in a county like
24 Will, accurately reflects minority populations and

1 what is obviously a growing Latinx population in
2 Will County. I believe those folks will be
3 undercounted when the legislature -- if the
4 majority uses ACS data to draw maps. And that's
5 not how we should do it.

6 Additionally, I know a few people
7 have mentioned the complete count efforts. We took
8 the treasurer of the state to the tune of
9 30-million-dollars-plus to augment federal efforts
10 to ensure that everyone in Illinois is counted in
11 the census. And, obviously, the census does --
12 census numbers do many things that assist our
13 communities, especially when it comes to federal
14 funding formulas, but one of the main things that
15 goes along with the census is redistricting. And
16 if you put all this effort and time and money into
17 a complete counting of the census and then to throw
18 it out the window by using incomplete and old data
19 is not the way that we should do it. We should use
20 the data when it comes in in now what looks like
21 August, decennial census data.

22 So I appreciate all the folks that
23 have gone out and knocked on doors and made sure
24 that the complete count was taken care of. But,

1 unfortunately, when it comes to redistricting in
2 the state of Illinois, it looks like your efforts
3 are going to be futile because we're not going to
4 use that data, unfortunately.

5 Thank you for being here today and
6 testifying. And, again, your testimony goes right
7 in line with now the seven-plus hearings that we've
8 had that we've heard time and time again from
9 people over the last week that they have grave
10 concern about this process and the data that's
11 being used. Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN TARVER: Is there anybody else that
13 would like to be heard, any other questions from
14 Representatives? Let me just take a quick scroll
15 through this. I think I see Representative Haas.
16 Go right ahead.

17 REPRESENTATIVE HAAS: Thank you. Thank you,
18 Chairman. I wanted to comment that I appreciate
19 the hearings that are being held and the
20 opportunity for citizens to have input. I just --
21 I wish that there were more opportunity for a wider
22 variety of citizens to have input.

23 I look at the schedule of the
24 hearings and where they're going to be held and I

1 see, you know, there are significant pockets of
2 areas that may not have the opportunity to give
3 input. And I think about some pockets of my
4 district that, you know, have issues with
5 broadband, with the lack of connectivity, so they
6 may not have the opportunity to give the input
7 that's desperately needed. And those may
8 significantly be those -- the black and brown
9 communities as well. And we've heard some
10 significant concern from our witnesses today with
11 that population.

12 So I just, you know, want that on
13 record that I think we're going to be losing some
14 input from some significant portions of our
15 communities and in my district as well. So thank
16 you for that.

17 CHAIRMAN TARVER: Sure.

18 Is there anyone else who has a
19 question?

20 I'm not seeing any hands. I just
21 have a couple comments as we conclude, you know.
22 First and foremost, I appreciate everyone's time
23 and your patience. I know we started a little bit
24 late, but we certainly appreciate everyone joining,

1 providing your input.

2 But, you know, I know there's been
3 discussion about transparency, things along those
4 lines. I want to reiterate what I said about that,
5 you know, this is the beginning of a 23-hearing
6 schedule. I do understand there may be some
7 connectivity issues. And, fortunately, each of
8 these communities has great representatives that
9 can ask questions on their behalf, but we want as
10 much participation as possible.

11 So if individuals are unable to make
12 a specific meeting, they can certainly still, you
13 know, provide their comments through the e-mail
14 address I provided earlier, which is
15 redistrictingcommittee@hds.ilga.gov. Everything
16 that's provided, you know, will be taken into
17 account. Also, that website again,
18 ilhousedems.com/redistricting, individuals can draw
19 their own maps. So I do understand if everyone
20 can't participate, but perhaps they can get to the
21 local library, use the internet there. There are
22 opportunities certainly to be heard. This is just,
23 again, the beginning. And I think having 23
24 hearings as opposed to the four that are required

1 by law is something that we should all be glad
2 about, and certainly the fact we had far more than
3 we had two years ago I think suggests we're headed
4 in the right direction.

5 So thank you, everyone, for your
6 participation, and, again, please feel free to
7 check the website out, send in a map, send in
8 public comment, submit your written testimony. We
9 want everyone's voices to be heard. Thank you very
10 much.

11 That concludes the meeting for today.
12 Thanks, everyone.

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1 STATE OF ILLINOIS)
2 COUNTY OF COOK) SS:
3

4 Valerie Calabria, CSR, RPR, being
5 first duly sworn, on oath says that she is a court
6 reporter doing business in the State of Illinois;
7 and that she reported in shorthand the proceedings
8 of said meeting and that the foregoing is a true and
9 correct transcript of her shorthand notes so taken
10 as aforesaid, and contains the proceedings given at
11 said meeting.

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